

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 15, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

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a<sup>1</sup>  
As shown in FIG. 1 of the accompanying drawings, each of such elements, denoted by 1, comprises a body 2 and a head 5 joined to the body 2 with recesses 3, 4 defined therebetween. The body 2 has a pair of slanted edges 6, 7 on its lateral opposite sides which jointly provide a V-shaped surface for contacting a pulley of a continuously variable transmission. After the element 1 is blanked out of a metal sheet, the edges of the recesses 3, 4 and the slanted edges 6, 7 are ground by abrasive particles, and delivered by a belt conveyor or the like to a subsequent process where the element 1 is thermally treated. After a given number of elements 1 are thermally treated, they are stacked in their transverse direction into an annular form. Endless rings 13, each comprising a plurality of stacked sheet-like metal rings 13 12, are inserted in the respective recesses 3, 4 to bundle the elements 1 into a belt 14 for use in a continuously variable transmission.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 25, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

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a<sup>2</sup> It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a method of easily and reliably sorting out defect-free workpieces blanked out of a metal sheet, particularly defect-free elements of a belt for use in a continuously variable transmission for.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 3, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

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a<sup>3</sup> To achieve the above object, there is provided in accordance with the present invention a method of sorting out defect-free workpieces blanked out of a metal sheet, comprising the steps of inserting the workpieces into a passage having a predetermined width to sort out those workpieces which have passed through the passage, analyzing respective images of the workpieces which have passed through the passage to compare the images with a reference workpiece image, reject workpieces which have a portion different from the reference workpiece image, and sort out other workpieces, and applying a gage gauge having a shape complementary to a required shape for a functional portion of the workpieces, to the workpieces which have been sorted out, and sorting out those workpieces whose functional portion has a shape complementary to the shape of the gage gauge, as defect-free workpieces.

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✓  
Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 19, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

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Q4  
More specifically, there is provided in accordance with the present invention a method of sorting out defect-free elements blanked out of a metal sheet, each having a body and a head joined to the body with a pair of recesses defined therebetween, the elements being stacked in a transverse direction thereof into an annular form and bundled together by an assembly of stacked endless metal rings inserted in the recesses into a belt for use in a continuously variable transmission, the method comprising the steps of inserting the elements into a passage having a predetermined width to sort out and deliver those elements which have passed through the passage to a feed path, analyzing respective images of the elements which have been delivered to the feed path while in the feed path to compare the images with a reference element image, reject elements which have a portion different from the reference element image, and feed other elements, stacking and arraying the fed elements in a transverse direction thereof downstream of the feed path, and passing the arrayed elements through a gage gauge having a shape complementary to a required shape for the recesses of the elements, and sorting out those elements which have passed through the gage gauge as defect-free elements.

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**Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 26, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:**

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a5  
The arrayed elements are then inserted in the transverse direction into gages gauges which have a shape complementary to a desired shape for the recesses. Those elements which have protrusions extending from the body and head into the recesses cannot pass through the gages gauges and are detected as defective elements. Only those elements whose recesses have a shape complementary to the gages gauges can pass through the gages gauges, and are sorted out as defect-free elements.

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**Please add the following paragraph immediately after line 20, page 7:**

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a6  
The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description given hereinbelow and the accompanying drawings which are given by way of illustration only, and thus are not limitative of the present invention, and wherein:

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**Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 3, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:**

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a7  
FIGS. 4(a) and 4(b) are plan views showing, by way of example, other defective workpieces that are detected by an image analysis in the method according to the present invention; and

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 7, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

a<sup>8</sup> FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of a recess inspecting device used in the method  
according to the present invention [[.]]; and

Please add the following paragraph immediately after line 9, page 8:

a<sup>9</sup> FIGS. 6(a) and 6(b) are views showing a belt for use in a continuously variable  
transmission.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 10, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

a<sup>10</sup> After a given number of elements 1 are thermally treated, they are stacked in their  
transverse direction into an annular form. Endless rings 13, each comprising a plurality of  
stacked sheet-like rings 13 12, are inserted in the respective recesses 3, 4 to bundle the  
elements 1 into a belt 14 for use in a continuously variable transmission.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 16, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

a<sup>11</sup> If the elements 1 include a defective element or elements, ~~they~~ then it may be  
difficult to insert the endless rings 13 into the recesses 3, 4. Therefore, before the

a" conc'l  
elements 1 are stacked together, all of the elements 1 are inspected.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 10, line 13, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

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a'2  
If the element 1 that has entered the passage 23 is contacted by the gates 21, 22 and stopped in the passage 23, then upon elapse of a predetermined period time from after the element 1 has stuck, the gates 21, 22 are displaced away from each other, and a slit (~~not shown~~) (not shown) is opened at the bottom of the passage 23. The stopped element 1 then drops from the passage 23 through the slit, and is rejected as a defective element.

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Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 12, line 19, with the following  
rewritten paragraph:

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a'3  
Elements 1 that are not rejected from the feed path are discharged downstream of the feed path, and stacked and arrayed in their transverse direction each time a predetermined number of elements 1 for use in a belt 14 are produced. The arrayed elements 1 are then inserted in their transverse direction into a recess inspecting device 25 shown in FIG. 5. The recess inspecting device 25 comprises an inspection unit 27 mounted on a mount base 26. The inspection unit 27 has a through hole 28 for the insertion therethrough of the bodies of the arrayed elements 1 and a pair of gages gauges 29, 30 each having a shape complementary to a desired shape of one of the recesses 3, 4.

Docket No. 4379-0104P

Appl. No. 09/788,648

Amendment dated March 1, 2004

Reply to Office Action of November 28, 2003

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*a'3  
concl* If an element 1 has protrusions extending from the body 2 and the head 5 into the recesses 3, 4, then such protrusions are contacted by the ~~gages~~ gauges 29, 30 and hence the element 1 cannot pass through the inspection unit 27.

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